



October 30, 2003

The Honorable Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor, Third District
821 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisor Yaroslavsky:

As you know, the Petersen Automotive Museum has on its premises fifty-eight cars and ten motorcycles that belong to the County of Los Angeles.

The cars are here pursuant to an agreement made with the Natural History Museum. The essence of that agreement is that they would be leased to the Petersen Automotive Museum for a period of thirty-five years. A condition of the lease is that the Petersen cannot do anything with or to these cars without the prior consent of the Natural History Museum. This stipulation appeared to be reasonable enough at the inception of the lease. However, we have found that in practice it has made the agreement unrealistic.

The Petersen Automotive Museum is dedicated to the collection, conservation, preservation, restoration, and exhibition of historically important automobiles. In order to bring the cars in question up to a standard where they can be exhibited, and, therefore viewed and enjoyed by the residents of Los Angeles County and visitors to the area, many of the cars urgently require either a full restoration or considerable conservation. We are prevented from doing this because the Natural History Museum is reluctant to either fund or even allow this work. As a result, many of the automobiles continue to deteriorate at an unrelenting pace. The Petersen Automotive Museum would like to be able to halt their otherwise inevitable decay and bring them back to a level that is acceptable for meaningful display in our Museum. The only way we could consider expending the necessary time and money in order to achieve this would be if title to the vehicles was transferred to the Petersen Automotive Museum, at which time they would be accessioned by us.

Petersen Automotive Museum Foundation, a Nonprofit Organization

Established by the Margie and Robert E. Petersen Foundation

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We are sensitive to the fact that when these cars were given to the County, some were subject to various conditions. We are confident that these caveats can be honored and respected and still allow us to bring the vehicles to a displayable condition.

We have become one of the leading automotive museums in the world, and as such, we have become a major destination address in Los Angeles County, attracting visitors from all over the globe.

It is our hope that, with this letter, we can institute a meaningful dialogue with you and your fellow Supervisors that would result in our being able to save and exhibit these historical artifacts.

We look to you for your support on this matter. We would appreciate your comments.

Yours Truly,



Robert E. Petersen
Chairman Emeritus